

## **Transmission-Based Precautions (Isolation): Droplet Precautions**

Doctors, nurses, and other health care workers must use Standard Precautions to limit the risk of spreading infection. This means that the health care workers may use gloves, gown, mask, eye protection or face shields when taking care of your child.

These precautions are required at all hospitals by Federal law to protect patients as well as health care workers. Transmission-Based Precautions (Isolation) are used along with Standard Precautions when the spread of infection might not be completely stopped when using only Standard Precautions.

The purpose of these precautions is to keep germs from spreading from your child to other patients, family members, visitors or healthcare workers.

### **Droplet Precautions**

Certain germs can be spread by droplets that come out of the mouth during talking or coughing or from drainage from the nose. These droplets may be big enough to see or too small to be seen. Your child may be placed on droplet precautions as a safety measure if he or she has symptoms of these germs or if laboratory results show that your child has these germs.

Your child may need to be on droplet precautions even if he or she seems to be well. This is because some germs can still be spread to other people from your child. Your child will need to stay in his or her room unless taken out of the room by a staff member for testing or procedures.

Droplet precautions can be frustrating for a child. A Child Life specialist may help by providing play activities.

Ways you can help your child:

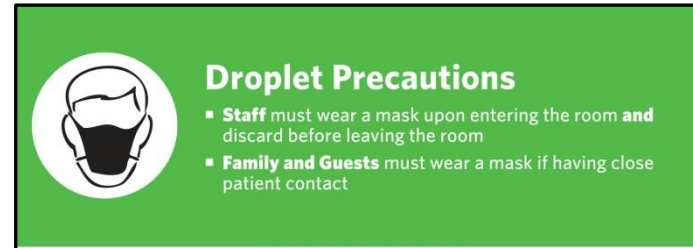
- Spend as much time as possible with your child or have a family member or friend stay.
- Plan activities with your child such as reading, playing games, music, puppet play, drawing, painting pictures, puzzles and looking at family pictures.

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## What Droplet Precautions means

A green sign will be posted at the entrance to the room when these precautions are needed so that everyone entering knows what to wear (Picture 1).

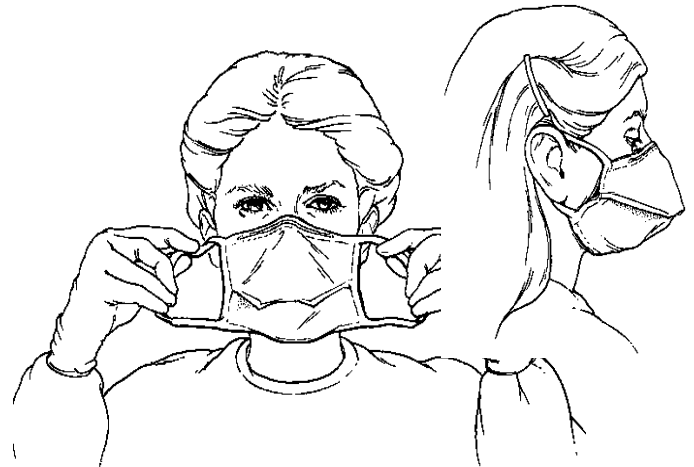
- **Everyone** (parents, family, guests, and healthcare workers) **must wash their hands with soap and water or use waterless alcohol-based hand rub when entering and leaving the room.**
- If parents are resting on the bedside furniture, they do not need to wear a mask. A mask needs to be worn only when the parent will be helping with the child's care or coming in contact with the child.
- Some examples are:
  - If a parent is wiping the child's nose or suctioning the child, a mask should be worn.
  - While holding your child, wear a mask.
- Family, guests, and healthcare workers must follow the precautions posted on the door to the child's room.



**Picture 1** A sign like this will be posted on the door to your child's room.

## Masks

- The mask must cover both your nose and mouth.
- Whenever you leave your child's room, throw away used masks in the waste can **inside** his room. **Do not** touch the mask itself. Handle it only by the ear loops or ties.
- When your mask becomes damp replace it with a new one.



**Picture 2** Loop the earpieces around your ears.

## Hand hygiene

Hand hygiene involves either washing hands with soap and water or killing germs on the hands with a waterless alcohol-based hand rub. Proper hand hygiene is one of the best ways to stop the spread of germs and prevent infections. To prevent your child or you from getting unwanted germs, wash hands with soap and water or use a waterless alcohol-based hand rub **every time you enter and leave the room.**

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## Hand hygiene, continued

**Wash your hands with soap and water at these times:**

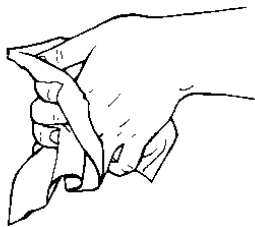
- Before eating
- After changing diapers
- After using the restroom
- When hands have dirt on them
- After contact with body fluids like blood, urine or vomit



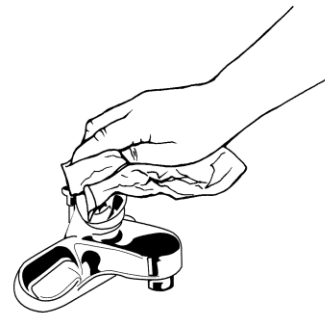
**Step 1** Wet hands with water and apply soap. Lather hands by rubbing them together briskly for at least 15 seconds. (Singing Yankee Doodle or the ABC song takes 15 seconds.)



**Step 2** Rinse well, starting from your wrist and rinsing downwards.



**Step 3** Pat hands with a paper towel to dry (rubbing with towels may irritate the skin).



**Step 4** Use the paper towel to turn off the faucet handles. This helps prevent getting germs on your hands from the faucet handles.

**To use the waterless alcohol-based hand rub:**

1. Apply the rub to the palms of your hands.
2. Rub your hands together covering all surfaces.
3. Rub until your hands are dry.

All doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers know they must perform proper hand hygiene before and after touching a patient, after contact with items near the patient, before putting on gloves for a sterile procedure and after removing gloves. It is all right for you to remind them to perform hand hygiene.

### **Before you leave your child's room**

1. Remove mask and dispose of the mask.
2. **Perform hand hygiene.**

If you have any questions, be sure to ask a member of your child's healthcare team.